

[Stories of a Cabby]

Duplicate

FOLKLORE

NEW YORK Forms to be Filled out for Each Interview

FORM A Circumstances of Interview

STATE New York State

NAME Terry Roth

ADDRESS 47 West 69 St.

DATE Nov. 29, 1938

SUBJECT "STORIES OF A CABBY."

1. Date and time of interview

Nov. 27, 28

2. Place of interview Hack stand at 66th and Central Pk West; also 59th St. and 5th Ave.

3. Name and address of informant Joe (French) Alexandrovsky

4. Name and address of person, if any, who put you in touch with informant.

5. Name and address of person, if any, accompanying you

6. Description of room, house, surroundings, etc.

Library of Congress

FOLKLORE

NEW YORK

FORM B Personal History of Informant

STATE New York State

NAME OF WORKER Terry Roth

ADDRESS 47 W. 69 St.

DATE Nov. 29, 1938

SUBJECT "STORIES OF A CABBY."

1. Ancestry

Russian

2. Place and date of birth

Russia (No further Information given)

3. Family

4. Places lived in, with dates

5. Education, with dates

6. Occupations and accomplishments, with dates

7. Special skills and interests

Library of Congress

8. Community and religious activities

9. Description of informant

10. Other Points gained in interview

FOLKLORE

NEW YORK

FORM C Text of Interview (Unedited)

STATE New York State

NAME OF WORKER Terry Roth

ADDRESS 47 W. 69th St.

DATE Nov. 29, 1938

SUBJECT "STORIES OF A CABBY"

Things aint like they wuz. Me I'm a hack driver 25 years. In them days there wuz independents, no company hacks. A guy made enough dough in three days, more'n they make in a week now. The people think they got better pertection wid company hacks. Like you take insurance. Guys think if they get hurt they kin shoot the woiks on the company, where's a independent, he ony got \$2500 insurance to cover any accident. But let me tell ya, what they don't know in that dey kin got that 2500 quicker'n a wink, quicker'n you get \$100,000 from the companies, Yeh, en you used to get some breaks then too. I had a man he was connected some way with a brewery. I had him for one week straight, during that time I slept in the cab, I never left the hack. He said, "wait fur me" and he means it too. So I waited fur him, At the end of dat week I had a bill around \$250 'cause on account

Library of Congress

the clock's always runnin'. Lady, he wuz on a drunk then. Drinkin' was his hobby. He'd go upstairs in a house and might come out 2, 3 days later, but he paid me.

And Mae Murray, she wuz a good one. She'd call up for a cab, she lived at 1 W. 67 then. You'd come around and she wouldn't come out for four, five hours, but you waited and ya got ya dough, too.

2

There's a woman lives down the block. A little short, stout woman, we calls her bundle of wash. About two years ago I wuz standing on the corner when she come up. She gets in the cab an' she's one of dose back seat drivers. I got her in the park and I says, "Which gate you want, Sixth or Seventh Avenue?" She says, "keep going, when I get there I'll make up my mind." I didn't know which way to turn so I go to Seventh Avenue. "I want Sixth Avenue" she says now. So I hadda take a chance of getting a / ticket but I head to Sixth Avenue. Den she says, "drive to 59th Street, Astor Plaza Hotel". So I go south on Fifth Avenue. "Where you gone? she hollders hollers , "what a fine driver you are" I got her down to 54th Street and I couldn't stand her any more. I says, "lady please, get off here. You're drivin' me nuts." Den I get sick for a long time and six months ago I come back to hackin'. I'm standin' on the same corner wid some of the drivers and that same bundle of wash, she comes up. "There's that crazy driver. He don't know how to drive a car. Ya oughtn't have learners takin' the lives of people" she sez to the rest of the fellers. Then they tells her I'm hackin' longer than any man there. She's nuts. Imagine, that happened foist two years ago.

There's a man down the block has a private rental. He ain't supposed to do work outside. He woiks with the door-men [doormen?] . For every run they get him, he gives them de tips, 10 cents, 15 cents, whatever it is. Naturally the doorman calls him. Now he says we try to put him out of business 'cause we go to the hack bureau about it. Da noive of dat guy. He's supposed to do all business right from the garage or from the telephone.

Library of Congress

One day a nice gent comes over and says, "take me downtown." On the way down he tells me he remembers when Murray Hill was a swell 3 hotel, and when I get him downtown he takes out his money and says he ain't got small bills, only big bill, I should take the change. So I turn around and go back to my stand uptown. When I got there there's the same man again. "Have you got my \$75.00? "What \$75.00" I sez. "When I got out to pay you I lost my wallet with \$75.00, maybe you found it." Lady, if I found \$75.00 I'd be on my way to Albany or somewhere. I tells him no. Then I says, I'll take you back downtown again, maybe you find it." But he don't, so he reports it to the police. The cop asks, "In this the same guy what drove you before? Where did you pick him up again?" "In the same place" the man says. "You're out of luck, mister" the cop says, "he never found dat dough. You'd never find him on the same stand if he did." That's a funny one, ain't it?